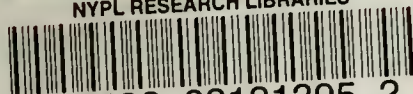


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# A REPLY

TO THE

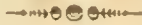
CRITICISMS BY J. N. BARKER,

ON THE

HISTORICAL FACTS

IN THE

PICTURE OF PHILADELPHIA.



BY JAMES MEASE, M. D.

MEMBER OF THE PENN SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA.

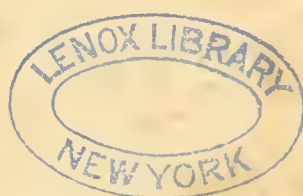


PHILADELPHIA:

*Clark & Raser, Printers, 33 Carter's Alley.*

1828.

M. T.



## REPLY, &c.

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### *To the Penn Society.*

IN the notes which Mr. Barker has added to his Address delivered before the Penn Society, on our anniversary, October 24, 1827, he has criticised several passages in my *Picture of Philadelphia*, impugned my accuracy, and denied some of my historical facts respecting the early events on the Delaware. As I took great pains to collect the materials for the compilation of the few pages of notices I have given respecting those events, and the early history of Pennsylvania, I was much concerned at his remarks; and have therefore again consulted the various works from which I obtained the materials for the statements I have given, in order to ascertain whether I had committed any error. The result has been, a full confirmation of all my positions, (with one trifling exception,) and this I shall now prove, to the entire satisfaction, as I hope, of our Society.

I. The first criticism to which I shall reply, is as follows, p. 14.

“ Dr. Mease, in *Picture of Philadelphia*, p. 2, says that Lord Delaware discovered and named the bay after himself, in 1610. I can find no authority for this.”

My authorities were,—1. Dr. Douglass, who says—“ Sir Walter Raleigh having forfeited his patent by his attainder, anno 1606, several adventurers petitioned the king for grants. The company did not thrive; and, anno 1609, they surrendered their charter, and a new patent was issued in the name of the Treasurer and Council. This new company appointed Lord Delaware general, or governor, by approbation of the crown. By mistake of the mariners, he fell in with Penn-

sylvania Bay, instead of Chesapeake, or Virginia Bay, and gave name to it, which it retains to this day.”\*

2. Acrelius also says that Lord D. gave his name to the bay and river.† The authority of this writer is deemed high by Mr. B.

3. Campanius Holm also mentions that Lord D. discovered the bay.‡

These were my authorities for the account I have given of the discovery and naming of the bay and river Delaware. The respectability of the two last will not be doubted by Mr. B., because he frequently refers to them in his Address; and I am not in the least uneasy as to the degree of reliance which he may attach to the first, although he is quite as much, nay, more entitled to credit, than Ogilby, who is quoted by Mr. B. “as worthy of attention.” My object is to show, that I did not invent the story of the discovery of the bay, by Lord D., and his naming it after himself; and that if Mr. B. “could find no authority” for these facts, I can.

Subsequent researches have confirmed what I had stated. Ebeling says, “Lord D. discovered the bay on his voyage to Virginia, and gave it name:”§ and De Vries, when he went to Virginia for provisions in 1633, after the massacre of the Dutch settlers on the Delaware, by the Indians, was told by the governor, “that the south bay was by them [the English] named my Lord Delaware’s Bay, who some years ago, was forced in there by bad weather, but that having found that place full of banks, they had never looked after it again, but that nevertheless it was their king’s land, and not New Netherlands.”|| This shows at least, that the belief of the

\* Douglass’ Summary Hist. and Pol. of the British Settlements in N. A. Vol. 2d, p. 390. Boston, 1751.

† Account of the Swedish Congregation, in the so called New Sweden, p. 3. Stockholm, 1759.

‡ Nya Sverige, p. 28.

§ History of Pennsylvania, p. 127.

|| De Vries’ Journal, in 4to. Alkmaar, 1665, in Du Simitiere’s MSS. Collection of the Library Company of Philadelphia.



visit of Lord D. to the river was general among the English.

I shall make no comment upon the circumstance of the Journal of De Vries, and of the works by Holm and Acrelius, having been quoted, and I presume, therefore, examined, by Mr. B., nor upon his saying "he could find no authority" for what I had stated, after giving us reason to believe that he had consulted one of the works I mention, and another, in which the testimony of this last is confirmed. The fact of Lord D. having entered the bay, is as well established as any other respecting the history of the United States. He arrived in Virginia, June 9, 1610, the year after Hudson, in the Half Moon, had been there,\* and may probably have entered the bay in the month of May, of the same year. Now, as it was impossible for him to obtain the knowledge of Hudson's visit to the same water, Lord D.'s visit was substantially a discovery, and he may therefore have deemed himself justified in giving his name to the bay, in conformity to the practice of voyagers, who call countries, bays, straits, sounds, and rivers, which they first discover, or think they first discovered, after themselves. Hudson, Bheering, Frobisher, Lancaster, Davis, and Baffin, are cases in point, and a hundred others might be mentioned. Some have immortalized themselves in this way, for supposed discoveries, to which they had no just title; of this Amerigo Vespucci is a striking example.

II. The second criticism respects the etymology of the word "Schuylkill." Mr. B. says—"The idea of Dr. M., that in all probability its low Dutch appellation was derived from the circumstance of the secret settlements of the people of Maryland on its shores, is not happy."

If not "happy," it would have been but fair to give the whole paragraph, instead of a part only, because it would then be seen, that if one explanation of the name could not

\* Hudson's visit to the bay is noticed in the Picture of Philadelphia, p. 2.

be sustained, I was right in another; and that the etymology at least, of the word, was perfectly “happy;” so happy, that Mr. B. himself has adopted it in p. 16.

In page 19, of the Picture of Philadelphia, I say—“Most of our rivers retain their Indian names; but Schuylkill signifies, in Low Dutch, ‘*hidden river*,’ or ‘*hiding river*,’ an appellation derived, in all probability, from the circumstance of the secret settlements of the people of Maryland upon its shores, *or from its running into the interior, beyond the researches of the settlers.*”

I obtained the knowledge of the etymology of the word Schuylkill in the following way:—Upon mentioning to my amanuensis, who understood Low Dutch, that I had heard the late Dr. Barton say, “the word Schuylkill was the only name of all our rivers, the derivation of which puzzled him, as it was certainly not Indian;” he said, it was composed of two words, “schuyl,” hidden, and “kill,” creek. I then recollected, that in New York, there were many streams to which the word kill\* is attached to some preceding word, to denote their size, locality, or some other circumstance, and relying upon the knowledge of the Dutch language by my clerk, for the meaning of the word “schuyl,” I ventured to give the English of the compound, “hidden,” or “hiding river.” I was gratified afterwards to find that Chalmerst and Proud† gave the same etymology of the word Schuylkill. It certainly was no unreasonable supposition, that the Dutch called the river “hiding,” from the circumstance of the secret settlements of the Marylanders upon its shores, from which, it is well known, they were driven, in 1642, by a force in two sloops, sent by Keift, the governor of New Netherlands:§ but as this is not deemed a “happy idea,” by Mr. B., he must be contented with the other, and probably the just, explanation, but which he has thought proper to omit. Had Mr. B. not been

\* Kline-kill, Kaader’s-kill, Kaats-kill, &c. &c.

† Political Annals, p. 632.

‡ Vol. 2, p. 251.

§ Picture of Philadelphia, p. 4—and Proud, vol. i. p. 110.

disposed to find fault, he would have given both, and quoted me fully. As he is in the daily practice of dispensing justice between man and man, it is to be regretted, that he should have evinced a disposition to withhold it on the present occasion.

III. I state that Sven Scutz, the commander of Fort Casimir, on the present site of New Castle, when taken by the Dutch, in 1654 or 1655, had "lost a leg in the Dutch service." Mr. B. says that "it was Stuyvesant, his conqueror, who had lost a leg in the Dutch service:" insinuating, in course, that Sven had fortunately saved his limb. I distinctly remember to have met with the fact of a similar misfortune having occurred to Sven, in two of the numerous works which I consulted, when compiling the historical notices of the early settlements on the Delaware, and I considered it as well established as any other I have recorded; but the most diligent researches have not enabled me to find the fact again. The circumstance was coupled with an apology for his tame submission to the Dutch, and mentioned to show that he had been a soldier, and therefore did not yield from cowardice, but from a conviction of the inutility of resistance to an overwhelming force; and this apology which I made for him, was suggested by one of the authors, to whom I was indebted for the fact. I now think he was not entitled to it.

IV. Mr. B. says—"It was on the 28th August, 1609, while coasting northwardly, not southwardly, (see Picture of Philadelphia, p. 2,) that Hudson discovered our bay."

The expression "southwardly," was used by me, in reference to the course of Hudson from Newfoundland to our continent and not to his voyage along our coast. The expression, therefore, "southwardly," in the sense I used it, is correct. Hudson entered our bay when coming from Virginia, and it is true was then proceeding northwardly, as stated by Mr. B.

V. Mr. B. says I am mistaken in saying, that "on the arrival of De Vries, the bay was called Nieuwport-Mey, after an early Dutch navigator;" and adds—"De Vries called it



Godyn's Bay, after his employer, Godyn. It had been Nieüwport-Mey seven years previously.' This is too bad. To misquote an author, and then assert that he is mistaken as to fact, and make the false quotation the ground of a critique!

My words are—"In 1630, under the direction of P. De Vries, the Dutch extended their settlements up the Delaware, on the western side, as far as Bompt Hook, which they called Swaandale. The eastern cape of the bay they called Cape Mey, after Cornelius Jacobs Mey, an early Dutch American navigator. The bay was named Nieüwport-Mey, and Godyn's Bay, from Samuel Godyn, an eminent merchant of Amsterdam, who was greatly interested in the first settlement of the New Netherlands, and is frequently mentioned by P. De Vries in his account of the country."

All this is given on the best authority. The brevity which I thought proper to observe in my narrative of the early settlements of the river, induced me to omit the particulars respecting the engagement of De Vries with some of the Dutch West India Company, who employed him\* to make a settlement on the south bay; but Mr. Moulton, in his interesting History of New York, has given it at length (p. 405); and Mr. Barker has abridged it, p. 16, omitting, however, to give credit to Mr. M. I did not specify the precise time, whether before or after the arrival of De Vries, that the different names were given to the capes and the bay, because I could not ascertain it.

Mey was certainly an early American navigator, for he came to Manhattan with timely supplies, in the year 1623, and in that year, or the next, settled on South Bay; but there is no proof that Godyn's name was given to the bay by De Vries. On this subject I shall treat presently.

\* Mr. B. calls Godyn the "employer" of De Vries, as if there were no other persons concerned with him; whereas, Godyn was only one of four of the nineteen directors of the West India Company, who determined to form the colony on South River, and De Vries accepted of the command of the vessel, from them, "on condition of his being coequal in every thing with the others." The partners were, Godyn, Van Rensselaer, Bloemart, De Laef, and De Vries.

I must now be permitted to return the compliment, by making a few remarks upon some statements in Mr. Barker's address.

1. P. 14.—He says, “In 1618, Lord Delaware, on his voyage *from* Virginia to England, died opposite the mouth of the river, which thence, it is thought, received his name.” Mr. B. quotes Stith's History of Virginia, but if he actually consulted Stith, it is singular, considering this author's cautious mode of expression, that he should be quoted for the positive fact. Stith says, “I *think* I have somewhere seen, that he (Lord Delaware) died about the mouth of the Delaware Bay, which thence took its name from him.”\* The time of Lord Delaware's death is well ascertained. It took place in the year 1618, on his second voyage *to*, not *from* Virginia (as stated by Mr. B.), when coming out with a colony of 200 persons, after leaving the Western Islands, and after a succession of bad weather and contrary winds.† But the precise place where the event occurred is not mentioned.

In the account of Virginia recorded by Purchas, it is stated that after the death of Lord Delaware, and thirty of the colonists on board his ship, “the rest refreshed themselves on the coast of New England, with fish, fowls, wood and water, and after sixteen weeks spent at sea, arrived in Virginia.”

That the name of the bay and river was derived from the visit of Lord Delaware there, in the year 1610, on his first voyage to Virginia, and not from his death off their mouth, is clear, from the circumstance of Sir Samuel Argol mentioning the “Delaware Bay” in a letter written by him from Virginia, to N. Hawes, in the year 1613, and while Lord Delaware was alive, in England. He says he “hopes to make a cut from our bay (the Chesapeake) into the Delaware Bay.”‡

P. 14.—“The Dutch commander (Mey) gave the name of Kornelis to the Southern, and Mey to the Northern Cape,”

\* Hist. Virg. p. 148.

† Purchas, vol. iv. p. 1774.

‡ Purchas vol. iv. p. 1764.



and in the note, (p. 51,) to this passage, Mr. B. says "he also gave his name to Zuydt Baai, it being called Nieu Port Mey, in contra-distinction to the old port Mey, or Bay of the Manhatoes." Mr. B. refers to Ogilby's America, p. 171, for these facts. In p. 170, this miserable compiler and fabulist\* says, "the southern mouth (of the Manhattans) is called Port Mey, or Godyn's Bay," and no more. Mr. B. is therefore not supported, even by this bad authority, for what he asserts. It is possible that the Dutch navigator may have named these places after himself; but after a diligent search, "I can find no authority for this." Nor is there any authority for the assertion, p. 51, that De Vries called the bay after Godyn. It certainly bore that name after De Vries came to the river: but again I ask, where is the record that he named the bay? De Vries makes no mention of the fact, nor do Hartgers, nor Holm, writers who expressly treat of the early settlements, and had access to the Dutch and Swedish documents; and the first of whom wrote as early as the year 1651.† Du Simitiere and Mr. Moulton are equally silent as to the particular person who gave names to the capes and bay. As both these carefully consulted all the early Dutch writers, they would not have omitted to mention the fact, if it had been recorded.

Mr. Moulton merely says that they were known by his name after he (Mey) had settled on South River. De Laet says the bay was called after Mey by "us," *nostrates*, but does not say who named it ‡

Mr. Barker himself gives two accounts on this subject. In page 16 of his Address, he says, "In 1629, an effort was made to colonize the South River (Delaware,) by Godyn, *who had already given his name to the bay*," and in p. 51, he says that De Vries called it after Godyn. I leave him to reconcile these different statements.

\* Any one who reads Ogilby, must be convinced of the propriety of these epithets.

† Beschryvinghe van Virginia New Nederlant, &c. Amsterdam, 1651.

‡ Novis orbis, &c. p. 72. "Quam nostrates vulgo May portum vocant, a Navarchi Cornelii May nomine."

In p. 15, Mr. B. refers to a view of Fort Amsterdam given by Mr. Moulton, "from an old Dutch book," whereas Mr. M. mentions no book: but says, "it originally appeared at Amsterdam, in Holland, at the bottom of a map." In p. 46, Mr. B. speaks of the "view of ancient New York, given by Mr. M.," and of another in the MSS. of Du Simitiere, in the Philadelphia Library as different, whereas they are the same. It represents the city as it was in the year 1673. The View referred to as given by Irving in his humorous history, under the name of Knickerbocker, and as representing the city in the year 1640, was taken from the bottom of a map of *Novum Belgium*, in the Atlas by Justus Denchers, but the year in which it was published is not mentioned. The map was certainly published after the settlement of Pennsylvania, because Philadelphia is marked on it. The publisher of the first edition of Knickerbocker, has improperly added several figures to the original. Besides these, there is in the collection of Du Simitiere, a coloured plan of the city "as it was about the year 1731."

The View, or "Picture of Philadelphia," which Mr. B. mentions as announced in the Philadelphia newspapers of 1754, to be ready for delivery, by George Heap, might have been seen by him in the office of the City Treasurer. As said to be stated in the papers, it is 7 feet long, but only 2 feet wide, not "two and a half feet." It is "an East view, taken from the Jersey shore, by George Heap, and published under the direction of N. Scull, Surveyor General of Pennsylvania, in 1754." Besides delineations of the river, wharves, and principal streets leading from the river, it contains, 1. Views of the "old fort" of 27 pieces of cannon, which was erected by the citizens of Philadelphia, upon the site of the present navy yard, on the alarm of a Spanish invasion, in the year 1744. 2. Of the windmill which was used to grind corn, wheat, and salt, and which existed until the American Revolution on the island in the Delaware. 3. Of the State House, with its steeple, and four other public buildings. This is the same engraving



which Mr. B. says was presented to the Corporation of the city, by J. S. Lewis. There were not two different views, one by Heap, and one by Scull, as Mr. B intimates. The writer has an abridged copy, by Heap, of the foregoing, three feet two inches long, by two feet two inches, containing, in addition to the above, a separate view of the State House, with its first steeple,\* and original wings, and a plan of the streets from the Delaware to the Schuylkill.

Mr. B. says, p. 18—"De Vries, on his return from Holland, in December, 1632, in answer to his joyous salute to the fort, met only a mournful silence, which too truly informed him of the fate of his countrymen." The salute was not to the fort; for De Vries says, in his Journal, under date 1632, "we learned, before we left the Texel, (on his second voyage,) that our little fort had been destroyed by the Indians, and the people killed, with thirty-two men who were working in the field;" and on the 6th December, when he went up the creek, he "found the ground strewn with their bones, the house destroyed, and the pallisades burnt, but saw no Indians. He therefore went on board his vessel, and *fired a gun to bring the Indians down.*"

In p. 26, Mr. B. calls the commander of Fort Casimir, "*honest Sven*," but mentions no traits of conduct which entitle him to this compliment. His conduct on his surrender deserves no praise, but blame. It is recorded that he had timely notice of the approach of Stuyvesant's fleet, from the Indians, and that he quietly permitted him to sail past the fort, without firing a gun, and thus was prevented from the possibility of communicating with Risingh, the commander at Fort Christina, or with Fort Gottenburgh on Tinnicum, from both of which he might have obtained some assistance, had he applied in time. He contented himself with sending a deputation to Stuyvesant when he landed, to know his intentions; these were quickly declared, and "*honest Sven*" finally signed the capitulation on board the vessel bearing the

\* This was taken down at the close of the War of the Revolution. See Picture of Philadelphia, article State House.

flag of his conqueror. The conduct of Sven was the more blameable, because upon the alarm being given by the Indians of the approach of the vessels, the inhabitants entered into a written agreement to defend the fort,\* but he made no call on them, and he had arms enough to make some resistance. For Stuyvesant found in the fort, four fourteen-pounders, five swivels, and a parcel of small arms. The Indians too might have been enlisted upon the occasion, and would have given important aid. Even the show of numbers might have caused some delay on the part of the enemy, and in the mean time, relief could have been procured, by land, from Risingh, who was only six miles distant at Christina. A delay of twenty-four hours, which General Prevost obtained from Admiral D'Estaing, enabled him to send to Beaufort, South Carolina, for Colonel Maitland and his troops, and thus saved Savannah, during the American war; and, on the contrary, the refusal of Lord Wellington to grant the commander of the forts of Salamanca, a delay of only three hours, obliged him to surrender. Had the required truce been granted, the arrival of Marmont, with his army, might have deprived the British of this grand acquisition.

The commander of Fort Gottenburgh actually sent Sven ten soldiers to his assistance, but they met with a detachment of fifty or sixty men, who had been placed by the cautious conqueror up the river, and who captured eight of them.†

When Stuyvesant appeared before Fort Christina, and demanded the surrender of the fort, Risingh refused to comply, although he “had no more powder than for one discharge of his guns,” and did all in his power, by repeated attempts at negotiation, to persuade Stuyvesant to retire; but he was inexorable—and making his approaches in a regular manner,

\* Appendix to Arfwedson, “*De Colonia Nova Succia in American Borealem deducta Historiola.*” Upsal, 1825.

† Arfwedson, p. 24.—The details of the siege of forts Casimir and Christina, occupy seven and a half 4to pages, and appear to be taken from the journals kept of the transactions, or the reports of them to the Swedish government.



and after fourteen days, opened his fire on the fort from his entrenchments, and obliged it to surrender. Conditions, however, were obtained, that the guns and property of the crown and company should be restored when demanded; and that all those who wished to return to Sweden, should be sent home at the expense of the Dutch.\* The report of "the killed, wounded, and missing," in this terrible siege, is not recorded.

P. 16. The fort, which Mr. B. says, "was erected by the Swedes *at the mouth of the Schuylkill*," was on the bank to the right, or west, and close to the ferry on State Island, a full quarter of a mile from the mouth of the river. Between this place and the mouth, was a marsh, which, in early time, and until the land on both sides of the river was converted into fine meadows, by draining and banking, was covered by water at every high tide, and offered no place for the erection of a fort. I have often seen the skulls, and other bones, picked up from the bottom of the bank, (which bank was the site of the fort) between the years 1794 and 1798, and which the tradition of the descendants of the Swedes, of whom several were then alive, pointed out as having been built by the early Swedish settlers.

After having accurately placed the Fort Christina on Minquas Creek, in p. 21, Mr. B. gives a confused statement on the subject in p. 26, where he says it was "on the north" of that creek. The fort was on the north side of the creek. The tradition is, that it was placed near the rock, which is still to be seen, about three miles, by the course of the stream, from its mouth; and this position agrees with the account of the Swedish minister Tranberg, to the learned traveller, Kalm, and with that given by Acrelius.

Still less reason have we to call "the fulfilment of the design of Gustavus Adolphus" of colonizing his subjects on the Delaware, by his daughter, "pious," than to apply the epithet "honest," to the cowardly Sven Scutz. If Mr. B. had

\* Arfwedson, pp. 22. 28.



been acquainted with the history of Christina, he would have known, that she never evinced any respect or veneration for the memory of her illustrious father, and that "piety" formed no part of her character.\* She moreover did not originate any patriotic or useful measure, during the short period of her indolent reign, if we except the invitation to several distinguished literary men to settle in Sweden—a measure which we are authorized to believe, proceeded more from her notoriously unbounded and pedantic vanity, than from a genuine love of learning or science. Besides, at the time when the new colony was planned, Christina was but nine years of age, and the government was managed by a regency, which was appointed after the death of Gustavus, at the battle of Lutzen, in 1632. The scheme of the colony was adopted by the government, in consequence of a memorial by Peter Meneuwet, who having left the service of the Dutch West India Company, in New Netherlands, went to Sweden for the express purpose of seeking employment. Having first persuaded Charles the First, of England, through the agency of the brother of Oxenstierna, the chancellor, to relinquish his claims to the country, on the Delaware, the Swedish government formed the West India Company in 1635, and a colony was sent out, in two ships of war, with every necessary for improving the country, and for trade with the natives, under the direction of Meneuwet. They landed at the place now called Cape Hinlopen, but the name they gave it, viz. "Point Paradise," could not have been merited either from its "beauty or fertility," as Mr. B. says, for neither of these epithets will apply to it even at the present day, but from the contrast which they experienced between a residence on shore, desolate and uncomfortable as it was,

\* For brevity's sake, I forbear to enter into the particulars of the life of this licentious "pedant in petticoats," as she has been justly styled. They are subjects of history. Mr. B. says, "Christina succeeded to the throne of Sweden in the year 1633." It is true she was then declared queen, but she was not crowned until the year 1650, and abdicated in the year 1654.

and is, and ever will be, to the sufferings they endured on shipboard, during a long voyage.

“The large folio of Ogilby on America, 1671,” is said by Mr. B., p. 46, to be “replete with portraits, views, &c. of great value.” These consist of—1. A map of New Belgium, copied, according to Mr. Moulton, from a Dutch map by Vischer. 2. A small view of New Amsterdam (New York). 3. A plate containing a beaver, a fox, or wolf; and an eagle pecking the back of “a kind of a beast somewhat resembling a horse, having cloven feet, shaggy mane, one horn just on the forehead, a tail like a wild hog, black eye, and deer neck.” To add to the picturesque scene, “this kind of a beast” is represented in a full gallop, as if alarmed at the attack of the bird of prey on his back. The horn is long, and spirally twisted, like that of the narwal or sea unicorn. Before it, is another “kind of a beast,” prostrate, and is represented as being attacked by an animal called “buffle, which (Ogilby says), according to Erasmus Stella, is betwixt a horse and a stag: though they are of a strong constitution, yet they die of the smallest wound, and are subject to the falling sickness: they have broad branching horns, short tail, rough neck, hair coloured according to the several seasons of the year, broad and long ears, hanging lips, little teeth, and skin so thick as not easily to be pierced. The females have no horns. When hunted, they vomit a scalding liquor on the dogs: can kill a wolf with their claws; their claws cure the falling sickness.” The first of these extraordinary, unique beasts, is said to be found “on the borders of Canada,” the last “towards the south of New York.” Neither of them have found a place in our systems of zoology.

A fourth plate contains an Indian chief, armed with his bow and quiver, and his queen, both finely dressed, and a young princess, making a prodigious display of her personal charms, *au naturel*; an Indian in a canoe—a river, rocks, and trees:—and thus endeth the chapter, which is said to be “replete with views, portraits, &c. of great value.”

John Read’s map of the city and environs, which is barely



mentioned by Mr. B., besides the "views of several public buildings," contains the plans of many of the original tracts of land with the names of the proprietors: and those of the water lots on the Delaware and the Schuylkill, the improvements on which rivers, it was thought, would go on simultaneously. Several plans of the city have been taken.

In the year 1768, Mathew Clarkson and Hannah Biddle published one, showing the built parts, which then extended no further than Eighth street.

In 1794, Benjamin Davis published one, including the northern and southern liberties.

In 1796, John Hill published a large plan.

In 1802, P. C. Varle published another, including the environs, showing the localities of the principal farms and country-seats, with the names of their owners. The plan of the city was extended over the Schuylkill, to the distance of six streets.

In 1811, J. A. Paxton published the last plot, which shows the positions of all the public buildings and public places; and as a guide is more useful than any of the preceding. It also contains several roads in the vicinity. The city and suburbs then contained 22,769 buildings.

"Scutz, or Schute," according to Mr. B., p. 26, was a title, meaning chief officer, changed into that of sheriff by the English, when New Castle was incorporated, in 1672,—See Smith's New Jersey. "This explanation is not happy." The title said by Smith (p. 72) to be "changed into sheriff for the corporation and river," was "schoute," the English of which, as given by Buys, in his Dutch and English Dictionary, is "sheriff or bailiff." The words scutz, or schute, are not to be found in the Swedish Dictionary of Serenius, nor in the Dutch one of Buys. The probability therefore, is, that scutz was not a "title," but a proper name. This idea is strengthened by the fact, that Risingh, the commander of Fort Christina, was the "chief officer," having been sent out by the Swedish government as "director general" of the colony, and from whom Sven Scutz received his appoint-

ment: and yet the supposed title of “scutz” was not annexed to Risingh, as it ought to have been, if it meant “chief officer.”

The trifling mistake of the excellent annalist, Dr. Holmes, in calling De Vries a Swede, which is noticed by Mr. B., p. 57, was first pointed out by Mr. Moulton (p. 406).

The account of the attack by the British upon Lewistown, in Delaware, is not given according to the statement by Palmer, (Historical Register, vol. ii. p. 83,) whom Mr. B. quotes as his authority.

Smith's History of Virginia, and Description of New England, which Mr. B. says deserve to be reprinted, were republished at Richmond, Virginia, in the year 1819.

P. 61.—“An imperfect fragment of the work of Campanius, rendered into bad English, is inserted in the second volume of the New York [Historical] Collections.” I received the fragment from the late Robert Proud, and forwarded it without alteration, to the New York Historical Society. I am not, therefore, responsible for its “bad English.” The fact of its reception from me, is mentioned in the preface to the Society's volume, in which it appears—and I have no doubt the notice of it was seen by Mr. Barker.



# ON WILLIAM PENN'S TREATY WITH THE INDIANS.

BY JAMES MEASE, M. D.



In the Chronicle of the 6th August is a paper by Mr. J. F. Watson, "on the Indian treaty, for the land, now the site of Philadelphia, and the adjacent country." The same paper is inserted in the recent 3d vol. of the Penna. Historical Society. Mr. W. had in his "Annals," labored to prove that the land now forming the site of Philadelphia, was acquired by treaty and purchase made by Wm. Penn, when he met the Indian Sachems and their people under the great Elm in Kensington, and this, says Mr. W. has been the general belief.—But alas—"such is not the case, as facts now to be adduced, will sufficiently prove."

It now appears from Mr. W's. late researches, that the site of the city was not purchased at the time alluded to, but that it formed a part of a large tract bought of Indians by Thomas Holmes, Penn's Surveyor General, on the 30th July, 1685, after the proprietor had returned to England. Mr. W. gives the treaty which he says he copied last winter from the records at Harrisburgh, and also a list of the articles bartered in payment for the land. The deed, alone, was first published in 1810, by the late Judge Charles Smith, in the 2d vol. of his edition of the laws.

I am pleased to find that the first question as to the time, place and cause of the treaty of the great Elm, came from Mr. Watson; for hitherto, any one who had the boldness to even hint the possibility of a doubt of every position respecting it, as given by him in his "annals," or by the Historical Society, was denounced as guilty of something like historical treason, and were charged with the crime of "unsettling venerable traditions," &c. &c., as if historical truth were not more valuable than any tradition, however ancient, and gratifying to our national vanity, pride, or good feelings. Mr. Watson's paper induced the appointment of a committee of the Historical Society, to examine the whole subject, and the result of their labours is a very candid view of all the facts about the treaties held by

Penn, with many interesting remarks connected therewith.

Considering the irritability which some good men evinced on the subject in question, it may be well to go into a few particulars. To settle the point as he thought, the late Roberts Vaux, inserted a paper in the transactions of the Historical Society, on the subject, and in place of official documents, he gave letters from Judge Peters and others, which merely went to show that the tradition about the transaction of which they had heard when boys, and which had taken place 60 and 70 years before they were born, was, in conformity to the general and cherished belief, that the land was purchased by Penn *under the shade* of the famous Elm Tree, on the 14th December, 1682, (when no doubt the snow was a foot or more deep,) and at a time moreover, when it was IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO BE THERE, because he was then in the 4th day of his journey to meet Lord Baltimore, at West river, below Annapolis, in Maryland; (1 Proud, 268.) So fully convinced were the "Penn Society" of the time, place and occasion of the treaty in question, that they erected a monument on the spot where the tree grew, to commemorate it, with suitable inscriptions, and when the tree was blown down, in March 1810, walking canes, boxes, obelisks, and a variety of other articles were made of it, and presented to the friends of America, all over the world, or preserved at home as precious reliques. The worthy members of the Society of Friends, too, make it a point to visit the memorial of the great event, on the occasion of their annual meetings in Philadelphia.

The authority of Clarkson, the biographer of Penn, was also brought forward to support the popular idea about the time, place and occasion of the famous treaty, and as it was a natural supposition, so it was said by some one, and believed, by thousands, that he had availed himself of the documents in the possession of the Penn family,

from which he framed the account of the scene he describes on the occasion in question. To the accuracy of every particular of this account the most implicit belief was attached, but we are now informed that Mr. Clarkson told Mr. J. F. Fisher a few years since, in England, that all the information he had respecting the treaty, was from Sir Benjamin West,\* who, it is well known, was scarcely of age when he left Philadelphia, and who, like the authorities quoted by Mr. Vaux, could only relate the tradition that prevailed respecting the events, among his countrymen. Clarkson even gives the address to the Indians by Penn, on the occasion of the great treaty, which is of equal authority with those put in the mouths of the American members of Congress by ~~Benjamin~~† that is, very proper language to be used in both cases, but of the delivery of which or of any, there is not the least record, or slightest intimation. Clarkson also ventures to assert that Penn “held in his hand a roll of parchment, containing the confirmation of the Treaty of purchase and Amity,” (before he knew that his proposals would be agreed to by the Indians,) and he speaks of Penn “laying the roll upon the earth, bidding them observe it as a sign that the land should be henceforth common to both people,” and finally “resuming the parchment, he presented it to the Chief Sachem, and desired that it might be preserved,” &c. &c. All this would appear to be matter of regular history, from the facts recorded by an eye witness, whereas there is no evidence of this treaty either among the Indians or in the archives of the State. If any written treaty had existed it would have been preserved with the others at Harrisburg, and copied by Mr. Smith, in the excellent long note, in the second vol. of his edition of the laws. It is singular that the committee of the Historical Society, who write on this subject should give the least credit to the speech of Penn to the Indians, as reported by Clarkson, after saying that “his *description of this treaty, savours more of the brush of the painter than of the pen of the historian;*” and further, that they “found the whole history of the treaty

involved in much doubt and obscurity, from the want of cotemporary records.” They prove or state as their opinion:

1. That “the earlier records of the colony give us no information whatever on the subject.”
2. That the letters of Penn make no mention of that treaty.
3. That none of the land purchases can by any fair reasoning, be connected with the great treaty under the Elm.
4. That the first treaty of purchase by Penn, is dated June 23d, 1683; place not noted.—Smith’s Laws, 2—110.
5. That the parchment roll signed by all the parties to the treaty, as detailed by Clarkson, the biographer of Penn, will be “in vain looked for.” They say, “it was not the way in which treaties were made with Indians.”—It was in fact a creature of Clarkson’s fancy.
6. I may add, that Proud, the Quaker historian, is silent on the subject of the place in which the treaty was held, and merely speaks of one treaty.
7. The committee quote the historian Oldmixon, for saying that Penn “made a league of Amity with 19 Indian Nations,”—“they believe that there were *several treaties*, and that the one held at Shackamaxon was probably the most numerously attended,” and add that “this treaty was there held shortly after the arrival of Wm. Penn in 1682, the least doubt cannot at present be entertained.” Whenever Dr. Johnson heard an expression of belief, of the authenticity of Ossian’s poems, by Macpherson,—he would say, “show me the originals.” On the present occasion, I say show me the proof of a treaty having been held under the Elm. Tradition is the only one to be offered. I add again, (8.) it is not mentioned in the pamphlet entitled “Good order established in Pennsylvania, by T. Budd, London, 1684,” published two years after the treaty was said to have taken place.
9. Chalmers, the Maryland loyalist, and American Annalist, who had the charge of the “public paper office,” in London, makes no mention of it: this he certainly would have made, had he found any notice of it, in the papers which it is evident he carefully searched for materials for his valuable work.

\* Hist. Mem. vol. 3, p. 163.

† Hist. Amer. War.



10. Finally, when collecting facts for my "Picture of Philadelphia, in 1810," I consulted Dr. Collin, the Swedish Minister, on this very point, and he at once told me, that the account transmitted by the old Swedes on the subject, was, that Penn held his great treaty of friendship with the natives at Wicacoe, under the shade of the immense Buttonwood trees, which I well remember grew there 50 years since, and even later, and some of which remained until recently. As this information was mere tradition, I made no use of it in my Picture of Philadelphia, and as I had sought diligently, but without success, for official documents on the subject, I merely stated that "the particular spot at which the first treaty was held, is *said by tradition*, to have been under the venerable Elm that lately stood at Kensington, *but of this there is no record*," p. 11. Why Dr. Collin did not refer to the Swedish tradition in his answer to Mr. Vaux, can only be accounted for on the supposition, that he was unwilling to destroy or weaken the dear delusion that prevailed respecting the locality and occasion of the treaty. He may, moreover have thought that one tradition was as worthy of credit as another, and left Mr. V. to enjoy that to which he was attached.

Wicacoe was a much better place to hold a treaty with the Indians than Kensington, because it was cleared and comparatively thickly settled for many years, by the Swedes, from whom refreshments could be procured for the Indians, and these we know are indispensable to all treaties with Indians, whereas Kensington was thinly inhabited, and in the woods, and hence I think there is more reason to repose belief in the Swedish account, than in the tradition about the Elm.

The north line of the purchase by Holmes extended "from *Consohocking hill* on the Schuylkill to *Pemapecka creek*, now called Dublin creek." Mr. Smith rightly gives the synonym *Pennepack* for this stream, and Mr. Watson, identifies "*Consohocking*" by "Matson's Ford," but in the copy in the historical memoirs this synonym is not marked by a parenthesis, as it ought to be, because the words are not in the original. The hill is a little below the Ford in Lower Merion township, and is now covered with a beautiful second growth of timber, and still retains a cave in which no doubt the native chiefs held their caucus, previously to,

and on the subject of the sale of the land in question. I recommend Mr. W. on the first holiday he has, to search for it, and enjoy the pleasure of the reveries and antiquarian reminiscences, illusions and thoughts, that will be forced upon him on the occasion. It will form a capital subject for a page in a new edition of his annals, or for a communication to the Historical Society. The lover of American antiquities will be pleased to learn that the Indian name of the locality has been retained and given to the village, which has sprung up since the construction of the rail road between Philadelphia and Norristown, and which goes through it. I hope sincerely that the inhabitants will resist the attempt of any modern refinement to change it for Smithville, Jonesville, Matsonville, or any other ville.

Among the articles forming the price for the land sold, are "*Sixty fathom of strawd waters*." As I am of opinion, that all who at this day read the list will be puzzled to know what was meant by the phrase quoted, it is to be regretted that Mr. Watson and the Historical Society, permitted it to go forth to the world, without an explanatory note. It is more to be regretted that so many mistakes have been committed, respecting the early events in Pennsylvania, and in conclusion of my remarks, it is proper to notice them.

1st. The affair of the locality and time of Penn's treaty.

2d. Mr. Watson says, p. 138, "that Mr. Gordon, the *late* historian of Pennsylvania asserted that he had seen at Harrisburg, an envelope, on which was endorsed, 'papers relative to the Indian Treaty under the Great Elm.'" Now Mr. Gordon, (who is living,) expressly says, p. 603, that "Mr. R. Conyngham, assured him, that he, (Mr. C.) discovered the envelope, indorsed, not as stated by Mr. W. but much more particularly, 'Minutes of the Indian conference in relation to the great treaty made with William Penn, at the Big Tree, Shackamaxon, on the 4th of the tenth month 1682.'"

3d. Mr. Gordon (p. 75) refers to the Memoirs Historical Society, vol. 1. p. 323, for the fact, that the treaty was held at the time just mentioned. On reference to the page, I find it stated to have taken place on "the 14th October," two weeks before the arrival of Penn. It is very singular



that the Hist. Society should permit such a blunder to go to the world under their sanction.

4th. On the authority of Proud, the historian of Pennsylvania, the landing of Penn is believed to be on the 24th of October. Mr. Watson stated in his annals, that by reference to the records of New Castle, Delaware, it appears that it took place on the 27th of October, and a copy of the minutes from the record was first inserted at length in the National Gazette, of January 1830, and also in the Saturday Chronicle of the 20th August, and may be seen in Hazard's Pennsylvania Register, vol. 5 p. 79. This puts the question beyond a doubt. Our Penn Society must, therefore, alter the day of their annual celebration of the Proprietor's arrival.

5th. The committee of the Society, on the subject of the treaty, say, that Penn's fine Mansion on the Delaware, "was opposite to Burlington," whereas it is well known, that it was about two miles below the present Bordentown, on the opposite side of the river. *This town is ten miles above Burlington. The Manor of Pennsbury* is known to all Bucks county, for the excellence of its soil. It is opposite to Newbold's island, in Falls township; and "the ruins of Pennsbury house," are marked on Kennedy's map of the county. Is it not strange that Mr. Watson should omit to notice the locality of Penn's Mansion, which he describes with so much minuteness in the Historical Memoirs, and equally unac-

countable, that he should speak of "the woods being opened in vistas, looking upwards to the falls," seeing that these falls are seven miles distant and invisible, owing to the bends in the river, from Pennsbury Manor?

To conclude, although I have thought it necessary to come forward (now that tradition succumbs to truth,) in opposition to the popular belief, respecting the time, place and occasion of the great treaty between Penn and the Indians, yet, I believe fully that many treaties were held, and have on every occasion that called for it, never failed to express my admiration, of the wisdom and justice, exhibited by the immortal founder of our State, in his transactions with the natives, and I yield to no one in veneration of his exalted character. It is pleasing to think that the finest compliment, and I believe the first, ever paid to his memory was by Voltaire, who in his admirable history of the Quakers, among other praises, says "his (Penn's) first care was to make an alliance with his American neighbors, and THIS IS THE ONLY TREATY BETWEEN THESE PEOPLE AND THE CHRISTIANS, THAT WAS NOT RATIFIED BY AN OATH, AND THAT WAS NEVER INFRINGED." Father O'Leary, a Catholic priest in Ireland, in his treatise on Toleration, is eloquent in his praise of Penn's conduct and liberality towards the natives, which he says, "gave him the success of a conquerer."

September, 1836.







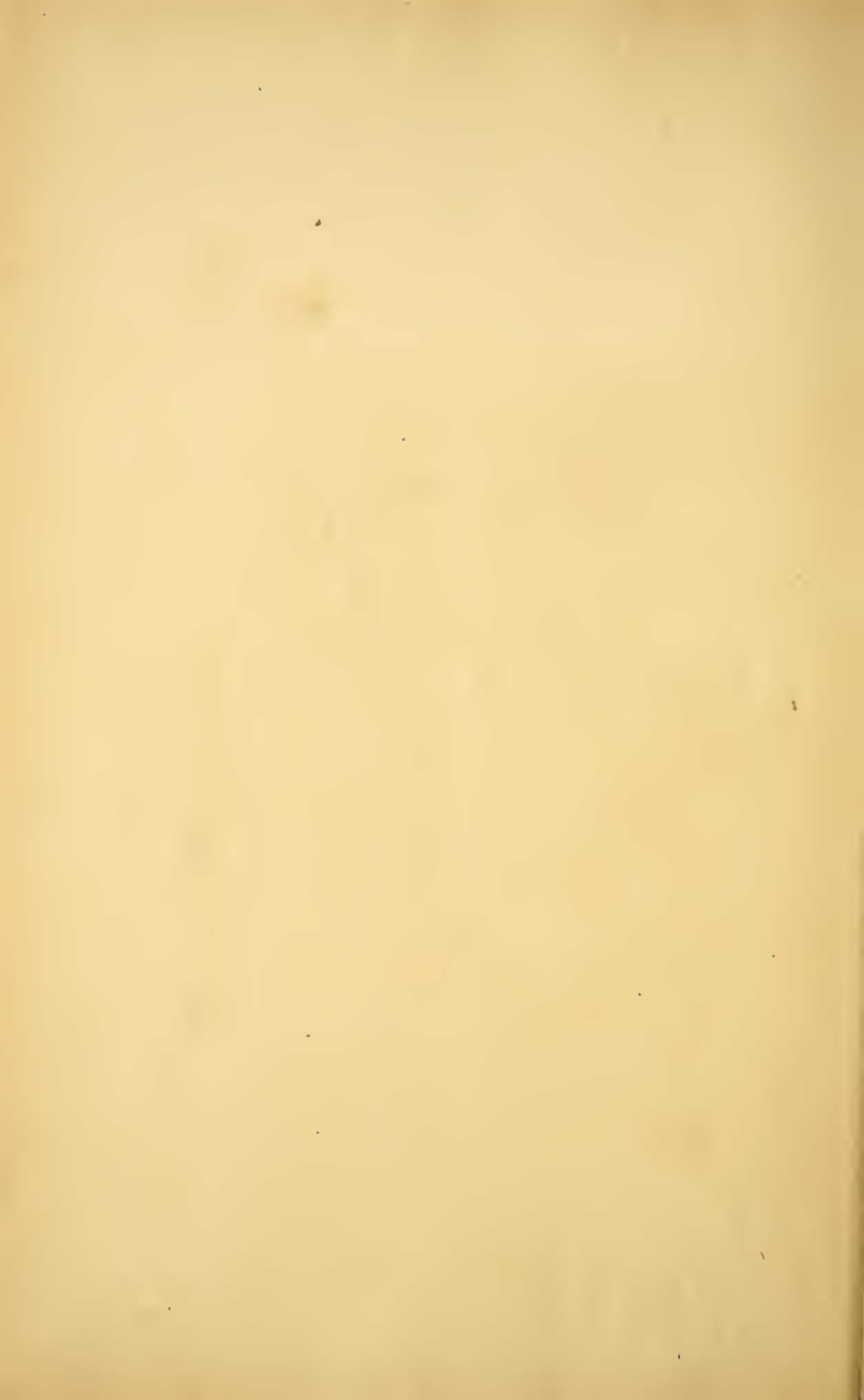




























































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